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"We're just a bunch of big, cuddly bears!"

edited, organized, laminated, deep-fried, shaven, and seduced by Pauls Toutonghi

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Afternoon Coffee and Jazz

Kevin Peckham

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Christy Blum is an up-and-coming folk and jazz musician currently living and performing in Boston. I first discovered Christy during the summer, playing at a quiet cafe in northern New England. I was immediately impressed by her quiet but powerful stage presence and the unique fusion of jazz and folk that is her music. Her voice is as agile and deep as that of any jazz singer I have heard, yet also soulful and smooth as is the folk tradition itself. Her live performance is impressively diverse. Consisting of the most outrageous novelty songs followed by the most vivid of personal experience. I caught up to Christy again at one of her show in Boston this fall, and at that time I had the chance to ask her a few questions...

To start off, I must admit a little nervousness as I waited for Christy to clean up following one of her many solo guitar appearances in a somewhat relaxed Boston coffee dive. Christy quickly set me at ease assuring me that it was in fact her first serious interview and that she was flattered by my visit. I suspected she was fibbing for my benefit, but I had no wish to press the issue. Christy is so controlling and commanding a presence on the stage that I was considerably startled to discover how young she appeared seated beside me. In fact, the supreme confidence of the musician was gone, as evidenced by an occaisional nervous laugh and a very sympathetic smile as I struggled to organize my questions and my professional demeanor:

So, where are you from?
Well, originally I'm from Scranton, Pennsylvania, though

I've spent most of my life in New Hampshire and the last few years in Boston.

How long have you been playing the guitar?
I started playing with my dad for our church youth group and it wasn't until last year that I started playing my own songs publicly.

How would you describe your music?
Oh, I hate this question... (tentatively) I guess 'new folk.' I listen to a lot of traditional folk music and I just hate it--it's all the same kind of thing for the same causes.

Where do your songs come from?
Personal experiences. I find it hard to write about other people. (A nervous laugh) I just write about nonsense.

Who or what are your major influences?
I grew up listening to jazz with my mom, and folk with my dad. I guess I got a fusion of those... but you can't really tell.

How would you describe myself?
(Pause) Shy... when it comes to my music. Also, I guess, honest... I try to be a good person.

What do you think about success?
Well, I can't really comprehend it at this point. It's something I'm just scared of. Not that it's something I really have to worry about at this point, or maybe ever. I'd just like to play my music and get by--not worry about it on a large scale.

What about jazz?
Part-time I'm the singer in a jazz band called "Swingset." It was put together three years ago to do a benefit for the task force against domestic violence... We played for Al Gore once... it's fun, but mostly we do schmaltz.

Schmaltz?
We do some no schmaltz; "Swingset" is the only place where I can be loud and bluesy... not in my own stuff, but I'm working towards it.

What are your plans for the future?
I guess I'm gonna keep on playing around Boston. Maybe next fall move to San Francisco and try playing out there for a while... and just keep writing...

..

And while Christy keeps writing, I'll keep listening to the worn little demo-tape that she gave me, imagining that it might be a collector's item someday, and knowing that before too long we'll all be hearing much more of Ms. Bluhm and her self-styled music. While it is very rare in this day and age to come across someone who is going their own direction in music, I feel confident that I have me a musical artist, in the true sense of the word, someone who is striving to invent and re-invent her own sense of music. Indeed, I would hardly call this sentence the end.

..

Kevin Peckham plays trombone in the WRMC-FM Polka Revival Band. He can be found on the new Cardigans album, singing gentle melodies with just the right amount of pep.

Swan's Way: Transcendent Mazzy

James Mantooth

..

We customarily call an artist like Neil Young legendary because he has been able, with single songs, to define genres other bands can mine for years. Smiling, monumentalized, Neil leaves a sketch and drives off in his pickup truck. Who the hell knew the implications a song like "*Helpless*" could have? Its big birds flap everywhere. Add some Lou Reed crooning "*Pale Blue Eyes*," and out pops a Galaxie 500, years later.

Hippie purists might not dream of calling the next folks on the sketch-scene 'classic.' Unless the drastic happens, they'll never hang Hope Sandoval's dress in the Rock & Roll Hollow Fame next to Billy Corgan's Zero. See, I started out idealistic-like, but shit, most people are to dumb to tell the vultures from the deepeners. Are those rolls of quarters in their pockets or are they just happy to see themselves? these were times, listening to the new Mazzy Star album, when this feeling of lonely wonder got stirred up in me and I was dismayed a moment because Hope Sandoval does NOT breathe-sing anything about a town in Ontario. And, summoning but one more ghost, like Mick Jagger, Sandoval often choose tone over enunciation. Deciphered, the lyrics break no special ground. But somewhere in all this bruised-mouth weariness, Sandoval's ebb and flow pulls her abstract, fragmented J-Mascisisms to stories, big enough for you and her to stand and cry a while in. So spend some hours on words and vivid alibis. What does Natalie Merchant have to hide? Are there two ways to heaven, the clever way and the honest way? A paradox: as many times as I've scratched my little Phish-head and wondered where the hell they find all those arpeggios, it has seemed to me that their innovations come to nothing. After the 2pacalypse and the coming of the mercy seat,

Phish will descend to gig at the celebrity golf benefits in hell, and Mazzy Star will inherit the earth. (**Editor's Note**: This should be a rallying cry for hopefull innocents everywhere!)

Every moment of the supercharged Among My Swan is more than the sum of its parts. When Hope sings backup for herself, it sound like horsehair dragged across a waterfall. Something sometime chilled the whole damn band to their bones. If you listen to these songs in the dark, little blue flashes will gasp up and down your arms. The best of them draw the sea up from gopher holes too fast for the wicked to change convictions.

Some stuff I though while listening: Miner's light in under-Colorado—the Colorado up valleys, hotel room weight and sparking, talking doll head, ascending scales on cello, automatic Christmas card/drive-thru bank cheery pings, handheld Super-8, tambourine slaps on Liv Tyler's thigh (damn her!), nauseated palette, Tammy Wynette's pancake factor sucking on a pick-up stik, dying in saloons w/jagged whack, spread softly in interim blood—cold night living in window reflections, melodies press wax on apples, red to purple to ashen hands, on way back to same whore and patch of yellow light in wire landing (maybe secret whore at top of Battell Block building)—heavy red curtain thinned in spots like a stag trying to rub velvet from its antlers—stretched blanket on gaze, dragged boards from ragged pool, pussywillows, all of a sudden the concrete and trees tip forward to motion, wow. Sometimes I have happy angelic choir-band dreams, alarm and fading song, think "Shit!" Hope Sandoval sings like she's asleep, or wants to be.

..

James Mantooth is not an egg.

Toasting A Big, Heavy World

Bryan Stratton & Jim Fish

..

"Trust us," Bryan said. "We're with a music magazine. *FMphasis.* In Middlebury."

Denis was not convinced. "You'll have to speak to Jay," he grumbled, eyeing us suspiciously. "You guys look like convicts, not like writers."

"We're college students," Jim explained.

Denis grumbled. "You'll have to speak to Jay," he said.

It's not that five bucks was too much to pay for Club Toast's Big Heavy World benefit show — in fact, the show turned out to be worth a whole lot more. But as college students and, most importantly, music journalists, we decided that paying *anything* for a show was too much.

The benefit funded Big Heavy World, which, despite its ponderous title, is actually a web-site located on the completely weightless World-Wide Web. The address, for those of you who are simultaneously browsing our publication and "surfing" the "Internet," is: **http:// bigheavyworld.com**. That final period is not actually a part of the address, rather our slavish self-subordination to the infrastructure that is modern English. Anyway... on to the concert:

FIRST BAND. *LINDY PEAR.* Bryan says: Lindy Pear were a lot of fun, and I'm not just saying that because it's one of those "I-know-a-guy-in-the-band-so-I-have-to-be-kind" situations. Very non-threatening and poppy, like Weezer without the annoying *Happy Days* video.

Jim says: Plus, the lead-singer/guitarist had cool glasses. I spent much of the time between Lindy Pear songs trying to procure alcohol from the waitresses, only to be denied (and justifiably so, of course), for lack of valid, non-Iranian identification.

SECOND BAND. *ZOLA TURN (*formerly *Sub Rosa).* Bryan says: I fell in love with all four women of Zola Turn simultaneously, not because they're simply beautiful (which they are) but because they happen to be fantastic musicians as well. Gush gush.

Jim says: I find it difficult, sometimes, to say precisely why I like a band. If I were stranded in some place without culture, immune from the input of radio, magazines, etc, some place like Cleveland, would I truly like the bands and singers that I claim to like today? I'm not sure. Also, I often find that my reaction to music is driven by image; does this person package well, are they selling themselves in a way I find appealing. This is a part of myself I don't like, but it's a part of me nonetheless, so... I, too, was drawn in by Zola Turn's beauty, but, ultimately, their music impressed me much more. Just being honest, folks. Check them out if you can.

THIRD BAND. *THE FAGS.* Bryan says: Like lead singer Eugene, I grew up in a barren, frozen wasteland full of ridiculous people who like to drown their sorrows in alcohol. But he's from the Ukraine, and I'm from Barre, Vermont. Still, they can't be all that dissimilar, because if I was going to front a band other than Marilyn Manson, I would front The Fags. Aggressive Eastern-European metal-punk with bizarre facial expressions and a drummer

who looks like Jake "The Snake" Roberts — I dig it.

Jim says: What can I say? My family is from a former Soviet-republic, too, so I felt immediate kinship with The Fags, which I expressed by loudly yelling obnoxious slurs in poorly pronounced Russian. I don't think anyone heard them but Bryan, whose ears I yelled into, and he just glared at me menacingly and threatened my well-being. I loved The Fags. Mostly, I think, because they're from the "loud music, intelligent words" school of thinking. When you do buy the CD, *No Fleas Gold Teeth and Lunch Money*, read the liner notes. You will not be dissapointed. The Fags were my favorite band here.

FOURTH BAND. *CONSTRUCTION JOE.* Bryan says: I only bought two CDs at the show (a remarkable degree of self-restraint, I must say), and one was Construction Joe's eponymous first album. They don't translate as well to CD, but their live shows are unbelievable! Countrified folky rock with a dynamic edge shouldn't have fit in as well as it did. The sheer intensity of the guitar and banjo solos kicked Mötley Crüe's umlauts in the ass. If they come near you, see them. If you buy the CD, turn it up.

Jim says: Construction Joe's instrumentation is not ordinary. Cello and banjo are not heard very, especially together. I loved the sound, which they call "sonic dirt" rock. Seems apt. As Bryan mentioned, guitar and banjo were played with verve—the guitarist's string broke just before one of his longer solos, and he managed to play it with nearly no loss of composure. The cello and banjo traded turns playing long passages of music, something I found rather remarkable.

CONCLUSION: Well, we missed the last two bands, Chin Ho and The Pants (with James Kochalka). So we won't talk about their sets. Bryan imagines James ran out on stage in facepaint and leather before shouting "You wanted the best, you got the best" and the Pants ripped into "Love Gun." But that's merely idle speculation. Jim remembers his father beating him with a ruler, quoting "Idle hands are the devil's tool, son." This memory, however, may be as erroneous as Bryan initial speculation. Nonetheless, we are done with this article and glad you took the time to read it. Until next time... say goodnight Bryan.

Goodnight, Gracie.

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Bryan Stratton and **Pauls Toutonghi** are dangerous.

New York Music

Matthew Landfield

Cabbies roar down Broadway
scr
e
e
eeeee
e
e
ch
atthecornerfora
fare
of a bus nothing but the incandescent hummmmmmm

Rumble
Trucks on stone fall
old bearing weight

level by level horns peel
voices wheels
tracks river waves
focused
car-alarm
singing
singing
singing
singing
singing
singing
like a ewe

wire-fence tangled
wailing for her life

before sound-lens reads layers
again
behind
below

above back
following
top
beyond
bottom

beat by beat by beat
red light
GO GO GO
engine
growl

STOP

yellow brakes broken braking
squeel
faces drip
past the window
like rain
pouring from the awning
Feet grind
the scrape
down
smooth like water
chanting like Indonesian teeth

So long so loud the sound is indistinguishable
in the light of the river's mind
drinking of filth and paved profanity

asphalt-steeped nothingness
while the perfect sky far
vaults carried by the
trumpet blast

of towers two
whose lungs
billow
gargantuan cavities mouthed
with the name of a whale
and defend in their shadow's embrace small brothers
Backs to the wind hunched below the fogs and
huddled close yet between the teeth
a swollen whistle scapes
to howl the canyons and uplift the evening buses busy
crawling like fat maggots in the mud.

..

Matthew Landfield was the first person I met at Middlebury College. He makes a mean arugula sandwich, and plays the trombone in the WRMC Elvis-Revival Band.

Read This!

David Weinberg

..

Hopefully, I've snared your attention with my gripping title. If I haven't, then feel free to stop reading. Are you still reading? Of course you are, if you just read this. That means you're reading my article. That's great. Way to go. You deserve something important. You *deserve* some reason to continue reading. Well, have I got a surprise for you! I'm going to talk about my radio show! You're so excited, I can already see you seething with joy and enthusiasm. Please, the roses are just too much.

If you have ever turned on the radio from 3:00 to 5:00 on Friday afternoon, then you would have heard my show. If you haven't... DO IT! I can't even describe how it can alter your life! There's a reason for that. Basically the reason is because it probably won't change your life very much. With almost any audio experience, you can only be changed in the present. At least that's what I think. When the sounds are over, you still have pretty much the same life. The only thing it may do is change your perspective on the world a little bit. Wait a minute... that's the catch! My show can help change your perspective! MY GOD, my show "BEHIND THE MASK," <u>can</u> make a difference. That's absolutely amazing! Have I convinced you to tune in?

No? Well then, listen for a second, allright... I call on guests and we talk about life. I basically got the idea from the film UHF when Stanley Spidouski (the guy from Seinfeld) was made into a local hero through the form of public TV. Doesn't that sound cool? But I want to make my guests the heroes, not me. They already are, really. What the show attempts to do is bring interesting people on

the radio in order to figure out what makes them tick. We play their music and listen to their life experiences. You get to listen to real people and find out who they are, what they want, what they done and what they want to continue to do with their time on this planet. Not only that, but it's done in an entertaining setting. What more can you expect from a program? Nothing. Nothing in the world, right?

The previous guests who have appeared on my show have be the owner of the Vermont Bookshop, the co-owner of Alley Beat, Billy Joel, the cast of *Dracula*, and Otter Nonsense. These were all very entertaining and interesting guests who have lived their lives (to whatever extent) and drawn experiences from them which they transfered to me and my listeners. Yes, they were even live!

Well, that's about it. 3:00-5:00 on Friday. A great way to relax before the evening's ribaldry!

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David Weinberg swears that he will write "something a little more interesting than a show promo in the next issue."

Super-Scientifical Madness: Jeru the Damaja Brings His *Wrath* to the Music Industry

Chris Vourlias

..

When Jeru the Damaja dropped "*Come Clean*" back in '93, heads everywhere turned to clock the dope new Brooklyn MC who, after being featured on Gang Starr's classic "*I'm the Man*," broke out with his own bomb-ass solo joint. Needless to say the single became an instant classic,
taking aim at all the wannabe ganstas and gangbangers with the warning:

Bought a tool
But didn't learn how to use it.
Got lost in Brooklyn
So you had to lose it.
Just for frontin'
Ya get that ass whipped.

The first single, though, was barely enough to wet our pallets, and so a few months later, "*D. Original*" fell in our laps and into our Walkmans. With DJ Premier's discordant piano loop wrecking ear drums everywhere, Jeru spat out:

Dirty
Because of the skin I'm in;
The fact I have melanin
Automatically makes me a felon.
Even though I'm righteous rotten's
What you're yellin'
But I'm not chain snatchin',

Or drug sellin'.
According to your books
You said I would be damned
Like Kam:
Scoundrel, opposite of
The King that I am.

But hip-hop heads, greedy muthaphukkas that we are, wanted more. And so midway through '94, the full-length album *The Sun Rises in the East* dropped. Despite moderate sales (by no means a surprise in the world of hip-hop), it was acclaimed by many critics for Primo's intoxicating beats and Jeru's razor sharp lyrics. In "Jungle Music," he chides:

It started on the sand
Of the land of the mother,
Word to mother,
King like my father.
My style survived slave ships,
Whips and chains, hardships,
Still through all this
The praise roll off my lips.
Bring your guns, chains, and tongues,
Force your religion on me,
Cut my hair the vibe still exists.
To destroy the molesters of my heritage:
What they conceal
The drums reveal,
My royal lineage.
King of kings,
God of gods,
Like my ancestors drums
I beat the odds.

More mics are killed
Than slaves during the middle passage.
Who rapes and ravages
And calls us savage?

In "*Mental Stamina*," he and Afu Ra, his boy from back in the days, spit verses back and forth in a style which brings back memories of some classic EPMD joints. With "*Da Bichez*," Jeru caught mad heat for what many considered to be a misogynistic song, but not from the heads who actually took the time to peep the lyrics, in which he attacks the gold diggers tearing apart his community.

Well a queen's a queen,
And a stunt is a stunt:
You can tell who's who
By the things they want.
Most tricks want minks,
Diamonds, a Benz;
Spend up all your ends,
Prob'ly fuck your friends.
High-post attitudes,
Real rude with fat asses -
Think that the pussy
Is made out of gold.
Try to control you
By sliding up and down on the wood,
They be giving up
Sex for goods.
Dealing with bitches is
The same old song.
They only want you
Till someone richer comes along.
Don't get me wrong,

Strong black women,
I know who's who:
Total respect I'm givin'.
While queens stand by you,
And stick around,
Bitches suck you dry,
And push you down.
Now it's my duty
To address
This vampiress
Giving the black man stress.
Recognize what's real
And not material
Or burn in Hell
Chasing Polo and Guess.

In "*You Can't Stop the Prophet*," Jeru plays the role of the super-hero, battling Ignorance and his army of evil-doers: Hatred, Jealousy, and Envy, who attack the Prophet with poisonous pork chop serum, and attempt to kill him by cutting off his dreds.

I
Leap over lies in a single bound.
(Who are you?)
The Black Prophet.
One day I got struck
By knowledge of self,
It gave me super-scientifical powers.
Now I
Run through the ghetto,
Battlin' my arch-nemesis,
Mr. Ignorance.
He's been tryin' to take me out

Since the days of my youth;
He fears his day will come.

And in "*Ain't the Devil Happy,*" Jeru scrutinizes his people over an eerie backdrop of violins, off-beat drum kicks, and menacing laughter.

Niggers are in a state of nothingness.
Hopelessness.
Lifelessness.
If you're in range,
I hope you hear this,
And try to change this,
'Cause it's disastrous.
Who gets the most loot,
Who gets bust?
Dollar bill y'all is the God we trust.
The days blow by like dust.
Even men of steel rust.
We're out here actin' ridiculous
When only he can save us.
Mentally enslave us
For little or nothing,
Kill our neighbor:
Animalistic,
Cannibalistic
Behavior.
Look to the sky for your savior,
He won't save ya:
He didn't save your forefathers.
Why bother, brothers?
You must discover
The power of self:
Know thyself,

Find thyself,
Hate in thyself,
Kill in thyself.
While he collects the wealth
That you sit back and murder for.
Ain't the devil happy.

Two years later, after putting in guest spots all across the board ("*Crooklyn Dodgers '95*" with O.C. and Chubb Rock off the Clockers soundtrack; "1, 2 Pass It" with Mad Lion, KRS-One, Doug E. Fresh, Fat Joe, and Smif -n- Wessun off the D&D compilation album; "*Invasion*" off the New Jersey Drive soundtrack; "Frustrated Nigga" off the *Pump Ya Fist* compilation; "Suicide Murder" with Bounty Killer; and probably a few others), Jeru returns with his sophomore album, Wrath of the Math.

Picking up with the destructive materialism he left off with on *The Sun Rises*, Jeru attacks the rap industry for the glamorized images it projects to the youth of America. Perhaps most impressively is the frank nature with which his verbal assault is geared. On "*One Day*," the album's first single, he explicitly mentions those he feels are responsible for hip-hop's decadence.

One day about six o'clock
I'm woke up by the sound
Of my buzzer and a car
Or a truck screeching off.
So I jump up, scratch my nuts.
But when I'm like, "Who's that?"
Nobody speaks up.
So I go to the door.
There's a note.
It says we have Hip-Hop hostage,

With guns to his throat.
Do the right thing
And we might let him go,
But if you call the police,
That's all she wrote.
You know what the motive is:
It's all about dough.
And in case you think we bullshittin',
Here's the photo.
I couldn't recognize the clowns
'Cause they was all hooded down,
But I peeped Foxxy Brown
Sippin' Krystal in the background
With fake alligator boots on.
And smack dab in the middle
Was Hip-Hop with a Versace suit on.
I immediately called Primo,
I said, "Hip-Hop's in trouble.
Meet me at my rest on the double.
Don't even jump in the shower -
Matter of fact, scratch my rest:
Meet me at D&D in an half an hour.
And bring all your shit with you,
'Cause you know what we got to do."
Yo Afu (What's up?)
Let's jet son like Elroy
If I recall correctly I last saw
Hip-Hop down at Bad Boy.
Let's see if Puff knows what's up,
'Cause he's the one gettin' him drunk
And fuckin' his mind up.
We go to the office:
He's nowhere to be found,

So we snatch up Jay Black,
And beat his punk-ass down.
"Now where's Hip-Hop?"
"A-ight! A-ight!"
He confessed, "Suge came
And took him from Puff last night.
He said he'd give him up if a real nigga
came to retrieve him."
So we went to L.A. later that evenin'.
When we got there,
Everything was a-ight,
And we brought Hip-Hop back home
that night.
One day.

With his second single, "*Ya Playin' Yaself*," Jeru again takes direct aim at Puffy and the Bad Boy crew, as Primo flips the beat Junior M.A.F.I.A. blew up with "*Player's Anthem*," and Jeru drops mad science like Dr. Jekyl.

Don't drink Krystal
And I can't stand Mo.
Never received currency
From moving a kilo
Or an ounce
Make 'em bounce
To this fake pimp-free flow.
I never knew hustlers
Confessed in stereo
Or on video.
Get caught
You know who turns state's
Evidence, murder weapon,

Confession, and fingerprints.
Mama always said, "Watch
What comes out your mouth."
Tight case for the D.A.
From here to down south.
Knowledge, wisdom, understanding
Like King Solomon's wealth.
You're a player but only
Because you be playin' yourself.

Jeru goes on to chastise women who fail to show respect for themselves, urging "With those hooker-type wears/ You're playin' yourself./With those skin-tight jeans, baby/ You're playin' yourself./Everything all exposed/ You're playin' yourself." In the final verse, he returns to the wannabe hustlers who use violence to sell their records, claiming "I have a greater mission./I hope that you listen."

In "Tha Bullshit," Jeru again takes a stand against the materialistic dreams of his fellow rappers, recounting an autobiographical tale of a wealthy lifestyle which ends in violence - a theme not all too unfamiliar in the rap world today. He, however, puts a clever spin on it, waking up to find it was all a bad dream.

Jeru also builds on the formula that made his first album so successful by offering a number of sequels to songs from his debut. With "*Physical Stamina*," he and Afu Ra again team up over an ill Primo beat to freak some back-to-back verses.

In "*Revenge of the Prophet (Part 5)*," the Super-Jeru incarnation from The Sun Rises returns to continue the battle against Ignorance and his henchmen. "It's been a while/Since I escaped the library/Fighting Ignorance every day/Is gettin' weary," he begins, picking up where the

final verse of "You Can't Stop the Prophet" left off. This time battling Trick-Knowledgy (Technology), Greedy Lou (found "outside the materialistic crack spot"), and the Pork Chop Patrol, the Prophet again finds himself trapped at the song's conclusion, Batman-style, making sure heads will tune in same Black-time, same Black-channel, for the next installment.

With "Me or the Papes," Jeru attempts to set the record straight after the ill-received "Da Bichez" off his debut. "We were misunderstood," he claims at the song's outset, "last time we brought you 'Da Bichez.' Now we gonna clear it up and let you make up your own mind like this." He then launches into his verbal assault on the stunts and tricks that keep good men locked down.

Now a queen's a queen,
And a whore is a whore.
She felt if she made me wait
I'd have more respect for her.
Adore her.
Eventually spendin' up my digits.
She felt that love would make me
Buy her mad material shit.
She likes to trick 'em,
'Cause ain't nothin' like a sleepin' victim.
East New York style stick 'em,
Ha ha ha stick 'em. . . .
She claims she loves my mind
'Cause I'm so intelligent,
But fuck my mental:
She was schemin' on my men.
Evil intentions
To deplenish the funds.
She tried to jooks me with the pussy

Said fuck the mask and gun.
I was a fool to fall in lust
With this evil genius;
She had me by the nuts.
She ain't got shit
But, man, she loves it plush.
Whip an' I whip
And suck it up like cannabis.
Back in the days
I would've scraped her for this caper,
But I realize:
It wasn't me it was the paper.

In the second verse, Jeru takes another swipe at Puffy Combs and all the "playas" over at Bad Boy, while continuing his assault on gold-diggin' freaks.

Before my record,
They didn't show it,
But now they throw it
Hopin' that they'll get drunk off Moet
Or Krystal.
But that's not my particular
Style and taste.
My name ain't Puff
And I ain't got loot to waste.
I ain't got time to waste.

In the final verse, he sets the record straight about the woman he's looking for.

Now a whore's a whore,
Find a queen and she'll be my Earth.
Respect, love, and protect her
For all that it's worth.

I admit I have flaws:
I flips at first,
But deep down my wish is
To give her the universe. . . .
Bitches the power,
While queens love refinement.
Don't stress environment,
Old age, and retirement,
Never have to wonder
Where my money went,
Where my honey went.
Is her back gettin' twisted
By the next fella
Always take heed to what I tell her.
When I'm wrong,
She lets me know I need correction.
When I'm right,
She's my reflection.
Still we use protection.
Through thick and thin,
Thin and thick,
She's my diamond in the rough,
Not a whore or a trick.
Great expectations
Of me and she building nations -
Everything we do and skyscrapin'.
Back in the days,
A devil used to rape her.
Nowadays,
He got her chasin' the papers.

Wrath of the Math stands fifteen tracks thick, although two of the songs ("*Frustrated Nigga*" and "*Inva-*

sion") have been released already, and few exceed four minutes (many are barely three). At fifty-plus minutes, though, it is an improvement over The Sun Rises, which didn't even reach forty. It undoubtedly tastes juicy as all hell, and it's smooth as Blue Label going down; but Jeru again leaves you thirsting for more.

By combining Primo's skills behind the boards, laying down the tracks, with his tight-ass lyrical onslaught, Jeru brings to hip-hop a more potent combination than a Mike Tyson knockout blow. He is without question one of the most gifted lyricists the art has seen, dropping mad knowledge every time he grips a mic. Heads can only hope that all the gangstas, playas, hustlas, and thugs will take heed to what he's telling, and turn hip-hop around, back in the right direction.

..

Good Lord, **Chris Vourlias** wrote a long article for this issue. Chris is an avid golfer, and can be seen during the summer months in Brooklyn, where he wanders the streets with his favorite nine-iron, **Lenny**.

Look At What the Cat Dragged In

CD Reviews by *Mark Moynier*

..

Lisa Germano: *Love Circus*

Remember when you were a little kid and would go up to the neighbor's cute cat and try to pet it? Sure, it would let you pet it for a while, but when it was sick of you, it would let you know by tearing your hand to shreds. It's a minor injury, but you feel stupid for not seeing it coming. Well, that was the way I felt when I listened to Lisa Germano's CD, *Love Circus*.

The guise of her music and voice is soothing (in a Mazzy Star/ Suzanne Vega kind of way) enough to lure the male into her musical realm, but then she turns unexpectedly and gives one hell of a guilt trip. Now, I am not the type of person that would cause her frustration, but I still felt bad for having XY chromosomes in several places in the CD.

As for the CD itself, it's the type that can easily be played as ambient music or listened to intently for the lyrics. The sound is very open, uncomplicated by the rhythmic drums and guitar. Other instruments add to the appreciated diversity of the music- an Indian horn and mini cymbals and a recorder (and you thought it was meant to play Hot Cross Buns). Her voice compliments the instruments perfectly with its grainy, ethereal quality. The lyrics take the style further by rarely flowing. In a sense they are almost stream of consciousness or post-modern poetry. There is no cohesive rhythm or rhyme to them. This is not to say that they are bad because they create an interesting soundscape.

The songs confront such uncomfortable issues such

as personal insecurities and admitting to bad relationships. For instance, I know that she winders if her partner thinks about her and that she feels that she's ugly. I know the latter isn't true because from the picture in the insert she looks like a cross between Alanis Morrissette (shameless eye catching technique, but it's true) and Liv Tyler, though she seems to be concealing rather large hips. Oops, I shouldn't have said that. In the appropriately titled song, "We Suck", she admits that the relationship sucks because, as she says, "I suck/You suck".

What am I trying to say? I think that the album is rather good, but that's what I have come to expect from 4AD Records. My advice? Listen to it on WRMC (play it or request it) and buy it.

..

Jan Dismas Zelenka Psalmi
performed by the Prague Madrigalists

Who? Exactly. That's what I thought when I picked up this CD in the station. Honestly, I don't like much classical music outside of gloom and doom of Slavic programmatic music, so I when I saw that this was Baroque, religious, and had singing, I was extremely skeptical about listening to the CD. What is had going for it was that the composer was Slavic (Czech). "Okay, I will just throw this in to say that I gave it a try," I said to myself. Sixty-one minutes later I had found something that I genuinely enjoyed.

When it comes to classical music, I like it to be simple and pure- no obnoxious operatic singing, no sappy romanticism, or excessive happiness. This series of reli-

gious Baroque pieces avoided this to my pleasure and surprise. What the music captures is a stately high society event. The pate ´ is amazing, the caviar is the best from the Volga, and the waiter is walking around with Dom Perignon. We can all have our fantasies can't we? Due the religious nature, left out of the picture is high society phoniness and shallow conversations about one's polo game.

Since Czech Baroque is essentially unknown in America, it's idiosyncrasies should be pointed out. Most obvious is the consistent use of brass through out his pieces and a lack of a harpsichord. This is especially peculiar in a chamber setting. Western Baroque revolves around the strings and a harpsichord in a chamber setting and brass instruments rarely emerge from the background in an orchestral setting. Also, the singing is in Czech in the first piece instead of the standard Latin for a religious piece.

I can't help but associate the Baroque nature, the singing, and the religious feel with Christmas. Maybe that's what I like about it apart from the sounds- nostalgia for past Christmas's. In any case, for those who truly enjoy classical, this is a great addition to a extensive selection or a way to expand beyond The Best of (fill in favorite composer) CDs.

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Vanessa Daou: ***Slow to Burn***

Do you ever have the problem that you just can't take certain people seriously? I do, and this is the case with Vanessa Daou's *Slow to Burn* album. I should have known that the album cover was a sign of things to come. What I mean is that Vanessa really isn't that good looking and

poses like she is (I mean, will be) a sex icon. Lesson #1- you can't be a sex icon if no one knows about you, much less if you aren't attractive. Based on what I have heard, knowledge of her existence won't come with this album.

First impressions of this album were that Vanessa Daou is the less talented, third cousin, twice removed of Sade´. What's more, this wasn't a whim, it continued through the album. The formula is all there to sound like Sade´- cool, smooth, open music, a saxophone, and seductive lyrics (I'm guessing that, in the right hands, they would be). What's missing is the convincing, airy, testosterone summoning, seductive voice. Lesson #2- trying to sound like someone who is popular will only set yourself for comparisons that can only ruin a fragile career.

Let me talk about the one thing that I can be objective about- the music. Admittedly, it's not bad in parts, but, for the other 80% that there is some Casio generated sound drowning out the redeemable bass line, it's otherwise horrible. Wait, I haven't talked about the saxophone yet. Any time the saxophone joined the clamor, it seethed of cheap lounge acts. That goes for the muted trumpet and piano also.

A common pattern in listening to this album is that I will like the song in the intro, hope that the song is better than the last one, and hate it as much as the rest when the lyrics begin. Let me give you some of the classic lines: "Can you taste the wine?" (with a whip cracking in the background) Of course I can taste the fucking wine, you bimbo! How about this one: "Now it's time for me to feel your pain" Come here. Meet my fist! I think my point is clear.

So, why did I waste my time to tell you about such a poor excuse for music? I have no reason other than I

found the album absolutely hilarious. I know that Vanessa is being dead serious with her lyrics, but they along with Casio keyboard will leave you doubled over. One detail that almost escaped me, which explains most everything, is that Peter Daou (her brother, I presume) produced the album. Enough said.

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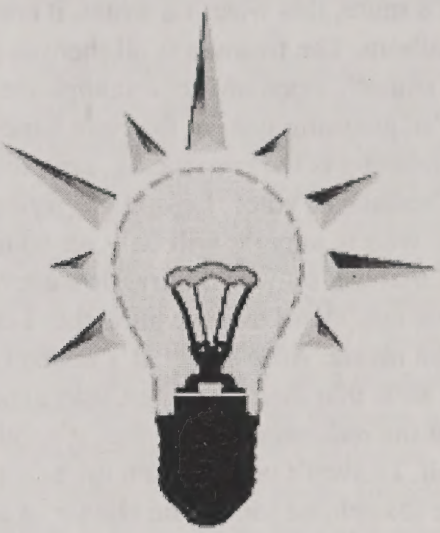

Mark Moynier can juggle fire and eat a grapefruit at the same time. If he were a fish, he would want to be a salmon.

Tahitian Bomb

Bryan Stratton

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Porno For Pyros tripped into Burlington last Friday and corrected a couple of erroneous assumptions about their whole scene: 1) The crowd is *not* a bunch of peace-and-love, patchouli kids, and 2) Perry Farrell does *not* have any artistic integrity.

To the first: One expects that with the release of *Good God's Urge,* an album so mellow that you can actually *feel* yourself getting drunk with the band, the shows would not be the typical high-velocity sausage fest one has come to expect from just about everyone nowadays. In reality, it goes something like this:

PERRY: "You're all very beautiful people, and there's a lot of love in your city... I can feel your energy. Here's a song called 'Good God's Urge.' It's about my father dying slowly of cancer."

CROWD: "Oh boy! Another excuse to mosh and crowd surf; convenient, because we're a bunch of white kids insecure about our complete lack of any ability to dance!"

Perry's utopian future of sharing and caring didn't go over so well either. Whenever he approached the lip of the stage with anything in his hands, be it harmonica, bottle of wine, or microphone, a tidal wave of grabby hands surged upwards; the manic greed was almost palpable. Flowers tossed to the crowd were crushed instantly; leis

exploded into confetti the minute they left Perry's hands.

Which wouldn't have been tragic in and of itself. When it comes down to it, a band can't control its following, despite what Pat Robertson will try and tell you. But Porno ruined a brilliant light show and an enjoyable musical accompaniment with an encore of Jane's Addiction's "Mountain Song" and "I Would For You." Pink Floyd, the Talking Heads, the Kiss of a year ago... and now Perry Farrell. It smacked of all the integrity of the guy who graduates from college only to triumphantly return every two months and make sure everyone still loves and remembers him.

The only thing Perry proved Friday night was that he hasn't been able to stand on his own artistically since breaking up the band that was, quite obviously, more than the sum of its parts. And the only thing his fans proved was that stupid people can drop twenty bucks on a show as easily as the next person.

Perry, turn from your evil ways and repent, before you become another sad, wasted hack doing three shows a night at the Tropicana. And kids, get a grip on yourselves; Marilyn Manson doesn't get here for another week and a half.

..

Bryan Stratton didn't like his last bio-blurb, so I'll be rather neutral on this one. Bryan will someday be a rock star, worshipped by thousands of mesmerized followers.

Our Subscription

James Mantooth

I have authority because was immersed
in each new hive of Hostess products,
and burst out spooling from the sugar furrows
to go epileptic before invisible placards,
chew bubble-gum,
and feel the sacrifice in my stomach.
Which is held, now, lazered aloft,
mirrors and the inexorable echoing of one bullet,
once forgotten—once buried in cement, and
once confined to
bed.
Now, sells newspapers on yr block (yr
cell-block). Peek, eyes water through breeze (creeps gas
around the shade, my how yr hand do grasp
that credit
card)
The idea pressed through screen and falls like flapjacks
on yr floor. Will turn key one day
and find rotten lake
with walls. And blood in water cup, and drink,
from cup. Go out and speak, red Cheshire,
in yr monochrome of skin

—even have to cum on
kleenex resumes. Ingredients
rained offen you,
and gutter ruffles
vending down to shallow puddles nigh
of corn and bitch in line to ladle. hum sunrises

in elevations
we have Been! IF YOU KNEW YOU were drying, if you.
I do not know if I am whale or exploding spirit,
smile clumsy are tire towards horizon.
Cannot march, so
trunk to tail, skin scrapen off my ass. —Trucks leave
the factories 4 factories
: and popcorn curse
(I sleep on the
cinema
floor, the salt, soda
water, wrappers. Dream you all
hung in one closet, and new
space in the world
from that. Each new
layer grapples to the shadow
of the lynched season.

..

James Mantooth plays tuba in the WRMC Guns n' Roses cover band.

A Conversation With Dylan Bolles

Pauls Toutonghi

..

Allright, so Dylan, you graduated last year, right?

Yeah.

And you're now living in the Middlebury area?

Yes, I'm living right here, in the Brown House.

So, you were a music major, and you're doing music, and... it's involved with the college in some way?

Well, I just had another orchestra piece played by the college orchestra a couple weeks ago. Besides that, I'm not really doing anything through the college. I still have ties to the faculty members who I worked with but...

So, what are you looking to do? Are you looking to work within the musical field?

Oh, definitely. I'm committed to that mode of living—composing, performance.

I remember I went to see, last year, some of the senior performances, and most of the pieces presented didn't have what you would consider the 'standard' instrumentation—there were a lot of found objects employed as musical instruments.

Was it the Chaotic Pendulum performances? That was my work and Tyler *Mahoney's*.

Yes, I think it was. But are you still interested in that type of, more non-traditional, musical expression?

Yes, but the composing process of those works, at least for me, was very similar to the process with "traditional" instruments. I guess that generally I am interested in new forms, new compositional forms, and new situations for improvisation. I like to include large sections of pieces that are different every time they're played depending on the atmosphere.

So the... the nature of the piece changes with the time it is performed and the location?

Well, it's tricky... the specifics of the piece, the overall effect of the piece is constant, in a very general sense. But there is room, a lot of room, for different commentary. Jazz works in a similar way. You take a song that exists before the performance and then, then you change the mood; you can play it fast, you can play it slow, you can do all sorts of crazy stuff to it, and somehow it still maintains... its sense of being that song.

Its core.

Yeah. But then the improvisers bring, to that form, their own ideas. And that part is different every time they play it. Ad so I'm trying to expand that type of idea, at least I was in the orchestra piece: trying to have a new situation where that kind of interaction happens.

I know that's common in jazz, improvisation within the structure, but is that common within classical orchestral work?

It used to be. And I think that this is one of the things that is sad about the way that truly 'classical' music is played now—music from the classical period, from the Baroque years, Bach, or Mozart, or Beethoven, the big heavies that everybody knows. What a lot of people don't realize is that they were improvisers. They all could improvise, and did improvise. They would sometimes go up and play a sonata for orchestra, a concerto, completely differently than it was written. I mean, it was the same thing—the orchestra would play the same thing—but you would change the piano part, if you felt like it. Chopin was know to play his pieces completely differently. I think that one of his students kept a log over the years of listening, where he annotated different ways that Chopin had played the piece.

Really?

Yeah. They all... all those guys improvised extensively. And the other thing is, Mozart... just the act of composing was improvisation for him... In these works, there are points called 'cadenzas,' and often that is meant to be the time when the soloist comments on the work, they're given free range to solo at that point, and then the orchestra comes in later on. But now, it's not as common as it used to be for soloists to actually improvise, they often play a famous cadenza—one done by some master at some point.

Why is that?

Partially, it's the training these people have to undergo. They are expected to know such a wide range of material, difficult technical material. The emphasis is put on reading, memorization, and technique. And understanding music and reading it out—I'm not saying that's robotic—it's just that they don't learn improvisation in your classical instruction, unless your teacher is kind of unique.

Do you play any classical instruments?

I play classical music on the piano. In December of my senior year, I did a concert where I played Chopin, Scarlotti, and Debussy. An then Duke Ellington, and then some pieces that I had written.

That's a fairly wide range.

Yeah, I think it's very important, especially as a composer, where you are in a position where all of music matters. At least for me, I like to take all of that in, and learn as much from it as I can, and then my vocabulary increases as to the kinds of sounds and effects I can hear. You know: the more I listen to, the more I can get in my body, the more I can get into my hands.

All music matters?

Well, it all says something. All music says something uniquely. Oh, I don't know... the Beatles, Balinese Gamalan music, old vocal music, classical music... Metallica. I mean, who can say what Metallica says, except a heavy metal fan... You can, but you can't. There

are things in Metallica and things in Stravinsky that, as far as effect, are very close. There's an expression of aggression that you can find, for instance, in Bartok's string quartets... but they all say things in their own way. The more you listen to, it's like having a larger English vocabulary, or having a vocabulary of different languages. It's especially like having a vocabulary of different languages. There are certain words that sound so good in their own language, but there's not an English equivalent to them. And so, if you know French, German, English, then, if you want to say something, you have all of these representation of meaning. You can say, this meaning sounds best in French, but you can't get in English, can't get it in German. It's the same things with music. You may want something. And you can't get it in Stravinsky, but you can get it in Metallica. You can almost get it in Stravinsky, but not quite. The more vocabulary you have, the more specific you can be with communication of feeling. That's why great writers are great writers.

The sense that everything a writer reads goes into his writing. It's like you toolkit.

Yeah.

Hmm... well, you mentioned dialects and different languages and writers. I'm just wondering, how do you feel about the connection between music and words, and the process of musical composition and writing? Do you feel that there's any degree of similarity? And have you ever incorporated words in a musical piece you've written?

Once. I guess I've done both. I am very interested in poetry. I wrote a poem, based on music I was hearing. And also, I set a poem, in the spring, I set a poem by Yehuda Amichai called *Roshi, Roshi* to music.

That was sung, wasn't it?

It was sung in Hebrew. I read the translation of the poem in English and liked it, and brought it to Robert Schine. He worked with me on both what it literally said, and also the further implications of it.

That must have been wonderful. I had Professor Schine's Jews and Judaism class in the fall of last year. We read a lot of very mystical texts, we got a lot out of lyrical representations of religious sentiment. I remember, I was working on a paper about Rabbi Kook, and I came to him in his office one day with the book that I had checked out of the library. I was very involved in the project and had made all sorts of notations in the book, using pen and highlighter. And I came to him and he saw the writing in the book, in the library book, and he was horrified. "Is this your handwriting?' He said. I mean, I had never even thought about it; just a careless, typical Middlebury student, I guess. I left his office and I practically went home and cried. I mean, I felt like I had betrayed the institution of learning, in some way. But he was very kind, helped me replace the book. But I know that I still get nervous sometimes when I see him.

(short laugh) But to get back to what you said before... the relationship between words and music. Well... that's pretty

old (another laugh). There are things that music can do to words to make them into more than they are on their own. I'm talking about lyrics. Great lyrics, are not great poems. Great poems are meant to be heard, to be spoken. Especially in popular music, there are lyrics in songs that just don't stand up on their own. But that's kind of a mysterious thing, how that works, how music shapes the meaning of words, or invests more of a meaning into them. And its a very hard thing to set poetry to music. People have done some amazing stuff with that. But as the composer, you're choosing what level of the poem, what meaning, to bring out. My rendering of *Roshi, Roshi* was very dark. It's a very humorous poem, and I meant to bring that out... but I just didn't.

Why doesn't it fit like it does in the mind.

Yeah, yeah. But I'm not unhappy with it. I don't know... I reading, or sometimes reading, Arnold Scherberg's theory of harmony, which talks a lot about harmony, and more about the philosophy of music. When he's talking about beauty, he says, it's not the composer's job to create beauty. Or the artist's job. He's obviously talking about process—it doesn't matter if you're a musician or a painter. He says that the artist creates out of need, and its after that, after that moment of creation, when judgments of beauty are made. I don't know... I think artists can pretend to control their works consciously, but I don't think that they really do. I don't think that if you're looking for a meaning of a piece of art, the creator is necessarily the best person to go to. You know, often they have an agenda. Often they have something they would like that piece of art to be, but what it is, they may not have a firm grasp on.

Okay... so, you majored in music, have a lot of ideas and desire to work within the medium, so... this is kind of an evil question... so, practically what do you do now?

Well, it's just kind of project to project. And I may go to grad school. I'm working on that now, trying to figure out who is thinking in ways that I want to be thinking in. As far as being successful, though, for me being successful means making successful art. I think that one of the reasons that artists are looked at as being fringe-type characters, is that they don't have to be dependent on traditional notions of success, because they're looking for successful art. If one person thinks they're being successful, who knows... fifty years down the line, they might be a hero, or fifty years down the line, no one will have heard or remember them. I would really like to do these things, and I would like to see what happens. Just keep finding people who are interesting. This is a strange time for me, because everything is so up in the air. I'm doing the music for a film that David Napier and Paul Dionne did together. But what am I doing now? I'm working at the bakery. But I just try to leave as much time in my life as possible for doing these things that I enjoy doing. Really, the beautiful thing about it all is... with all of these projects, this work, with all of this, the end result is art.

Editor's Note

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Howdy, folks. Ideally, I would want you to read *FMphasis* on a cold New York City morning, a day when the streets are somewhat misty from the sunlight, and the people are relatively fresh, hustling through the sharp cold. Though it may seem perplexing, I strive for this magazine to have a New York-morning sort of feel, as much as is possible in this odd little New England town.

Well, there you have it. I'm fairly pressed for time, and figure you just read the whole magazine anyway, so... Thank you to all of the writers and others who make this publication possible, especially Alley Beat, and the tireless Howie Young.

- Pauls, 11.17.96

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Direct any questions or concerns to: Pauls Toutonghi, (802) 443-4337, or, on campus, ext. 4337. If you want to write for FMphasis, or respond to previous articles, then call me, or send a disk with your article on it to: Pauls, Box 3714, Middlebury College, Middlebury, VT. 05753. Thanks for taking the time to read this publication!

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